342 In constructing a house, not a single nail, wooden plug,
or peg is used, but the entire structure of stakes and wickerwork
is usually tied firmly together with fresh bast from the bark of a
[289] fig tree or with spliced fibres of banana trunks or papyrus stalks.
The height of the huts varies between two and four meters (in
Ruanda as much as eight meters); the diameter is between
three and six meters.

In Urundi I did not see residential huts of any other shape,
but, according to Baumann, there are residential huts with a
cylindrical bamboo substructure on the upper Kagera (No. 4,
[343] p. 218). In Urundi I have seen these used only as storage huts
in the mountains where bamboo grows.

As has already been mentioned above, each family has
its own hut, and if there are several wives, each wife has her
own hut. There are no special houses for bachelors, unmarried
women, strangers, communal gatherings, or for specific societies.
However, there are half-open roughly constructed work huts for
343 blacksmiths and smaller well-built huts for young cattle
(uruhongore) and for the storage of field crops (ivikeka). The
[251] storage huts are shaped like baskets, tapering toward the bottom,
and are twice a person's height. They are covered with a flat,
conical straw roof which is usually removable (see p. 56). All
this stands on a low grate of wooden poles to protect the hut
346 yet very close to it, there usually stand a few small spirit huts
778 (ikigabiro), not more than a meter high, made of straw and
[782] reeds. In these the spirits are offered meat, milk, or produce
of the soil in pieces of broken pots or pumpkin shells (see pp.
● [774] 121, 135, and Plate 18a). Another miniature hut (ikitabo) is
dedicated to the chief god, Riangombe or Kiranga. One sees
many more of these huts in Urundi, Uha, and Ussumbwa than
in Ruanda.

364 The Barundi, and above all, the Bahutu, are far from
356 exemplifying the great cleanliness which usually prevails in
342 the vicinity of the huts in Ruanda; [23] they throw garbage
[514] next to the hut and defecate in the banana grove surrounding
the huts, but the coprophagous dogs and vultures, wherever
they exist, make it their business to remove the worst.

231 the last herds of the long-horned cattle in the Urundi border villages west of the Kisuma River; east of this, in lower northern Uha, the bush forest and tsetse fly begin.

In Urundi and Ruanda there are none of the smaller, short-horned zebu or humped cattle that are found in the rest of East Africa. Bahima cattle are so well adjusted to the climate and the mode of life of the highlands of the interlacustrine region that they thrive only in this region. As soon as the animals are taken to the lower areas, that is, to Unjamwesi, Lake Victoria, or to the coastal regions, they languish and soon die, even if they are not stung by the tsetse fly. In this respect they are quite like the Batussi themselves with whom they live in a kind of symbiosis.

As a former nation of shepherds, the Batussi place a high value on their cattle which is quite foreign to the Bantu. It far exceeds the estimate of their capital value. Cattle are not regarded as producers of meat, as an "article of consumption," but as original capital from which only the dividends (milk, [231] butter, blood tapped from the living animal, hair) may be used, while the capital itself (individual heads of cattle) may only be exchanged for other valuable capital assets, for example, women. More than that, cattle have a high sentimental value for the [182] Mutussi. His entire thoughts and aspirations revolve around the cattle; they are for him the mainstay of his social order, yes, even the object of his devotion which in many cases even transcends into the religious sphere. Accordingly, they are objects of a cult which is full of symbols and mystical relationships. [776] The highest deity, Imana, is first of all protector of the cattle. In East Africa we find a similar attitude among the Hamito-Nilotic nation of herdsmen, the Massai. In whatever concerns [462] cattle, a woman has no say at all. The entire breeding and care of the cattle, even milking, is the job of the man. It is true that in this sphere too the Bahutu have to do all the heavy work, cleaning the animals, tending the cattle in the pasture, milking the cows, etc., but the Mutussi does the more delicate work: he chooses the animals for breeding; he is the veterinarian; he decides what animals are to be killed or sacrificed; and he does this job with all the affection of the sportsman for his animal.

439 from Urundi and Ruanda are sold in Usumbura and Bukoba for export since there is a heavy demand for them. The hides are almost without exception from animals that died, either useless steers or sterile cows, which for this reason are now killed in much greater numbers than before. Since for reasons mentioned above other cattle are seldom slaughtered, the export of hides will remain quite restricted in the future.

One of the "superstitious" customs connected with cattle
272 farming whose practical basis and meaning cannot be dis-
825 covered any more is that the Murundi may never heat or even boil milk. If he did so, the cow from whom the milk had been taken would get a sore udder or she would even stop giving milk altogether. It is also believed that the cow would develop sores on her udder if the Murundi ate peas or peanuts on the day he drank milk. This taboo evidently also has dietetic reasons.
On the other hand, it is difficult to understand why someone
752 with a wound on his leg or on some other part of his body is not permitted to look on while a cow is calving; it is assumed that his wounds would then grow even larger (No. 19, p. 423).

231 It is certain that the Barundi have taken over the belief
776 imported by the Batussi that especially close connections exist between cattle and the chief deity, Imana. All cattle are dedicated to Imana and are believed to be creatures "possessed" by Imana. Instead of Imana, Riangombe is also often mentioned. On the other hand it is reported that even the "devil," or Rikiranga, the most important of the evil spirits (see p. 121), is the owner of a cattle herd in the vicinity of Mujaga which includes two steers dedicated to him (Afrikabote [African Messenger], 1904, p. 123). Yet the precise extent of these religious beliefs regarding cattle is quite unknown. Finally,
576 we might mention that during the involved greetings of the
231 Barundi the phrase, "ischo-scho-amascho," that is, "cattle,
[782] cattle herd," is repeated. Van der Burgt considers this typical herdsman's greeting a kind of supplication to the main god, Imana, to grant the person greeted all kinds of good fortune which is epitomized precisely by cattle (No. 19, p. 530). In van der Burgt's opinion all salutations of the Barundi are of

241 beginning of the cultivation of the fields as soon as the rainy
782 season has started. This is done after he and his sorcerers (abafumu) have practiced a number of ceremonies and have
[776] offered sacrifices to the principal god, Imana, the fertility god. The order of the head chief is passed on by the subchief to the lower batwale who again pass it on to the Bahutu. The Bahutu also offer small gifts to the god. When they begin to till the field, a sorcerer (umufumu) dances in front of them on the first day, shouting and gesticulating, to banish the evil spirits and to bless the seed.

241 According to Father Gassldinger the consecration of the
782 fields takes a somewhat different form in central Urundi
796 (Mujaga). At the beginning of the rainy season, after the high grass has been cut down and dug into the topsoil with hoes, work is started with a ceremony that is supposed to bring the blessing of Kiranga. [58] The men, painted yellow and red, line up with their hoes on the field which is to be tilled. Kiranga with two escorts (ivisjego) sits on the side of the field. A girl who is painted and richly adorned stands in front of the men in the center of the field. She now begins to jump, dance, and sing while cutting the high grass with her sickle. Still singing, she asks Kiranga for a successful sowing and curses the sorcerers and witches who might want to harm the field. The men promise her ample gifts of beer for the summer. The men walk slowly behind her turning the soil over with their hoes which they strike rhythmically into the ground. Depending on the type of seed, Kiranga is invoked by a particular name: Njamurimi when sorghum is sown, Njabaschi for peanuts, Rumambo for corn, etc. (No. 45, p. 316).

782 The heir presumptive to the throne of the king is believed
241 to hold in his clenched fist at birth a grain of seed of each of the
[644] crops of Urundi. If the corn or sorghum in a field has been dashed to the ground by hail or a cloudburst, the Muhutu who cultivated the plot runs around the field with a cattle bell, and by its noisy clanging he reminds the god to whom he has made sacrifices of his duty to protect the field from evil spirits. If this clanging of the bell is done properly, the crops lying on the ground will raise themselves to an upright position.

846 birth to a girl or a boy. When she leaves the house, her head is newly shaved, and she wears a broad headband made from a corn leaf, probably as a symbol of fertility and as an amulet.

The mother suckles her baby as long as she has milk and
853 as long as the physical condition of the infant seems to require it, which frequently is as much as three to four years. After giving birth to the child, she remains separated from her husband until her menstrual cycle begins again. However, if menstruation fails to occur, the separation is soon ended.

The birth of twins (amahassa) is greeted with mixed feel-
845 ings. Van der Burgt is of the opinion that it gives rise to joy because the Barundi attribute a religious meaning to the birth of twins which they regard as "ope incubi" [the result of intercourse with a spirit] (No. 19, p. 325). On the other hand, Gassldinger states that the birth of twins is considered a bad omen since twins are the favorites of Kiranga, and for this reason they will soon be taken away by him (die) unless the parents pay ransom by making large sacrificial offerings (No. 45, 1914, p. 314). I refrain from giving an opinion as to which
845 conception is the correct one. However, it is a fact that the
782 birth of twins is followed by extraordinary rites, sacrifices, and celebrations. The underlying reason [111] for this is probably that it is known from experience that twins are usually physically weak, and also they cannot get a sufficient amount of nourishment from the mother. As a result, both (or one of them) usually die unless Kiranga is propitiated by the offering of sacrifices. Upon receiving the news of the birth of twins, crowds of neighbors and friends gather. They sing and provide presents and large amounts of food which, however, are only intended for the spirits and disappear at night. A priest (kiranga) is called in. Aided by his assistants and numerous participants, he first performs the ceremony of the "holy spear" (see p. 134). By vener-
● [776] ating this symbol, its patron, the great spirit Kiranga, master over all material things, is shown gratitude, and his special blessings are called down upon the twins and their parents (No. 19,
845 pp. 516, 324, 216). Then the young men, with their faces
535 painted red and yellow, perform ritual dances in the courtyard

775 The spirits of the dead are, without exception, more or less evil and hostile to the living even if they were relatively good-natured when they were still alive. The dead person was forced to leave behind everything that he loved and cherished in his life, and for this reason he is filled with envy for those who survive and possess all these things. These jealous spirits, hostile to men and causing sickness, ruined crops, cattle epidemics, and other misfortunes, are the dreaded abasimu or imisimu (sing., umusimu); to repel, confine, appease them, or to win their favor forms the largest part of the thoughts and acts which occupy a Barundi's mind in his daily life. We find these primitive evil spirits among all the Bahima under the same name, abasimu or imisimu, even in the southern area of settlement, in Ufipa (No. 047, pp. 167-168). The envy and
775 hostility of the abasimu are soothed and assuaged by placing
782 valuable objects belonging to the deceased on his grave. Also, as often as possible morsels of food and parts of the objects formerly belonging to the deceased and now in use are offered as a sacrifice (see p.136). The incorporeal spirit eats or uses only the incorporeal part of these sacrifices, i.e., the "essence" of the proffered beer, meat, millet gruel, jugs, knives, arrows, hoes, etc. The sacrificial offerings are nothing but a premium to obtain greater security against the hostility of the abasimu. By no means can they be regarded as pious offerings to the revered and beloved ancestors. The Murundi only offers sacrifices to the manes because he is afraid of them. Yet a more effective method than making sacrifices is joining a
775 religious secret society, the religious fraternity of the ababandwa
794 of which we shall speak in greater detail below (p. 124). These ababandwa assume a privileged position in the realm of the spirits after their death. If their behavior within the society has been found correct, they come to Riangombe where, as imandwa, they form a kind of bodyguard of the god. They are, so to speak, the saints of the Barundi heaven.

● 776 Above the innumerable nameless abasimu and above the imandwa there is a stratum of higher spirits who are given names.

776 The relation between these two groups is similar to that of the ruling caste of the Batussi to the Bahutu (No. 19, p. 213). They are all personified beings whom we may call simply gods. A whole series of them bears the same names as former historical personalities among the Barundi or neighboring peoples. Everything that is said about them proves that these gods were originally heroes, chiefs, and kings of the people. As a result of their apparently superhuman characteristics and acts, they were worshipped as heroes and have gradually been elevated to the rank of gods. The hero has not been formed after the image of god, but the god after the image of the hero (No. 43, p. 280). Nor are these gods personifications of great natural phenomena, as, for example, the sun, moon, clouds, or thunder. The Murundi regards these phenomena simply as the residence and the expressions of the abasimu who inhabit them but not the personification of individual gods (No. 43, p. 358 ff.).

776 177 The name-bearing hero-gods of the Barundi who have been [120] vested with the characteristics of superhuman personality and immortality are -- judging by the attributes and histories ascribed to them -- partly popular gods of the indigenous Bantu and Batwa and partly an import of the Hamitic conquerors, partly also a mixture of both these elements. Van der Burgt does not believe that the deified heroes were originally Hamitic princes but emphasizes (reported by letter) that "most of the names of the gods belong to Bantu religion and are Bantu words." He maintains that in addition to the language the Batussi also acquired the gods of the Bahutu, but that the Batwa have some gods of their own, for example, Indagarra. However, among the 30 names of Barundi gods listed by van der Burgt (No. 19, p. 214), the following appear to me to be of Hamitic origin, or at least not genuine Bantu gods: Riangombe, Umugassa, Wamara, Kagoro, Ruwambo, Ruhanga, Rugba. Of these, Riangombe (Ljangombe, Djangombi) is also worshipped as a god in the Bahima states of Ruanda, Kisiba, Mpororó, Ankole, and others. He is thought to have been a Ruanda-Mutussi, the pupil of the first Ruhinda, and it is said that he distinguished himself by his great magic power (see also p. 188 [not translated]). Umugassa

776 or Mugascha is worshipped as a god of streams and of rain in
177 Uganda ("Mukessa," see Anthropos III, p. 214), in Ankole, Kisiba, Karagwe (Lake Mugascha), Kissaka, and Ussuwi. According to the tradition of the Basiba, he was a former king of the Sese Islands in the northern part of Lake Victoria (No. 31, p. 128; No. 27, p. 110; No. 34, pp. 518-519). Wamara is worshipped in Ankole and in Kisiba as the spirit of the dead souls. According to Banjankole tradition, he was a king of the Batschwesi in Baera (Uganda) who were a Hamitic people different from the Bahima, and he conquered Ankole. According to Rehse, he was "formerly a great ruler to whom the nations from Nyanza to the Congo State owed allegiance" (No. 31, pp. 126-127; No. 34, p. 520). Kagoro is regarded in Kisiba as a grandchild of Wamara (No. 31, p. 133). Rugaba or Lugaba, who is worshipped as the creator of man and cattle in Kisiba and in Ankole (No. 27, p. 108), was, according to van der Burgt, "the oldest king of the Wahinda" (No. 19, p. 219). Rehse writes of the gods of the Basiba that "the description of this world of spirits would at the same time represent the oldest history of Kisiba as well as that of all the central African countries." This also applies to the hero-gods of the Barundi. It would be a rewarding task to study these religious sources, especially for missionaries!

776 The Basiba worship a supreme god named Rugaba as the creator of the world and the highest giver of grace, but they never offer sacrifices to him (No. 31, p. 125). In the same manner the Barundi and Banjaruanda (No. 28, pp. 1-13) worship Imana. He is never offered sacrifices or prayers, as an unapproachable supreme being. People prefer to turn to gods who are closer to human beings, who have once been human beings themselves, like Riangombe, Kiranga, Wamara, and others. Although he is conceived of as the personified creator and ruler of the world, Imana is the only one in the abode of the gods of the Barundi whose name is sometimes used as a
776 general term for the world of the spirits. Imana is simply "the
778 divine," "the godhead." Imana is also the term for all that is sacred to the Murundi: the sacred trees, the sacred steer, the

776 [778] king, the amulets, the oracle animals, the sacred spear, etc. (No. 19, p. 214). The same applies to Ruanda (No. 44, pp. 284; No. 39, pp. 102, 109). Imana is given a number of different names or is identified with other gods, depending on his different characteristics and functions. This is also true in [551] Ruanda. Children are often given names which contain the word Imana: [121] Kaimana, little Imana; Mbonimana, gift of Imana; Ndorimana, appearance of Imana; Keschimana, ornament of Imana (No. 23, 1913, p. 308). Both men and [842] women, if they wish to have offspring, wear an impusu y'Imana, a garment of Imana, made of reddish barkcloth with black circles painted on it. Imana is the supreme god of all manes, of all ancestral spirits, and thereby has the character of an old national god.

Although Imana as the sole creator of the world ranks high above the other gods, one nevertheless cannot describe this as a monotheistic concept of the Barundi, as is done by some missionaries (No. 44, p. 283). Nor is it correct to attempt to see a kind of "Trinity" in the fact that, besides Imana, the Barundi have two supreme gods, Rikiranga and Riangombe, whom they often identify or confuse with Imana (No. 19, p. 214). This is to put Christian interpretations on the matter, and these are foreign to the thinking of the Barundi.

It appears that Kiranga or Rikiranga ranks closest to Imana. If Imana is described as the supreme head of the high ancestral spirits, Kiranga is the ruler of all the lesser demons and of all things material. For this reason von der Burgt describes him as a kind of "logos payen" (No. 19, p. 216). He is the god to whom people appeal first for assistance in all worldly matters. It is Kiranga to whom the priestly cult of the crowds is devoted, to him the ceremony of the "sacred spear" is dedicated (see p. 134), and the high priest calls himself Kiranga for he is "possessed" by him, he is his medium (p. 123). To all appearances he is a deity of the old Bantu population and has remained 776 quite free of Batussi influence. The missionaries refer to 778 Kiranga as the "devil" (No. 23, 1904, p. 123). It is said that 793 near Mujaga in central Urundi Kiranga possesses two large herds

776 of cattle led by two sacred steers. He is thought to have a sacred
778 mountain administered by a priestess who wields great influence
793 and is even immune to the power of the king, although the latter keeps her under constant guard so as to insure that she fulfills her cult duties. If she neglects her duties, she and her closest relatives are executed upon the order of the king. Her office, it is said, begins and ends with the reign of the king, for after the king's death she has to take poison.

776 Father Gassldinger describes Kiranga as the "great
782 destroyer," the Lucifer of the Barundi. People appeal to him first in all their afflictions, misery, and fear, and it is to him that most sacrificial huts (akararo) are dedicated. Inside these huts there is, as a rule, a big three-legged earthen pot with three spouts into which the sacrifice is deposited. Besides beer, grain stalks constitute the main sacrificial offerings made in these huts. Horns of cattle are also burned in them as sacrifices (No. 45, 1913, p. 359 ff.).

776 It is characteristic of the confused conception which the Barundi have of the different personalities of their gods and spirits that they often mix up the terms and attribute the names of several gods to a single one of them. For example, one may hear them say: "Riangombe is powerful, he is Kiranga; Kagoro is also Kiranga, he is Sengoga." Kiranga is also called Rugaba, Ruhanga, Inganje, Njabaski, Indagarra, or Rukisa, or these names are used as epithets of Imana, and the word Imana itself is used as a plural concept (No. 45, 1913, p. 363). Among the names listed there are several which we already know, as shown above (p. 120), from other Bahima states as the names of specific gods and spirits. In Urundi their images seem to have faded [122] so much that they are confused with one another, and the concepts people had of them seem to have been reduced to mere attributes or epithets of Imana who in any case has already become a collective term for "sacred" or "divine" rather than a personified god.

Riangombe is third among the gods. He is the supreme head of all good spirits (imandwa) whom Imana entrusted with the task of guiding human beings and protecting them against evil

776 spirits (abasimu) (No. 44, p. 286). In Ruanda the religious society Kubandwa is dedicated to him (see p. 124), and after death he is the judge of the just and the unjust. For this reason he plays a more important role than any other god in the ethical and emotional life of the Barundi, and the same is true in Ruanda. This is also demonstrated by the fact that Riangombe (or Imana) is the protector of what to the Murundi and the Munjaruanda are their most treasured possessions: their cattle (see p. 46).

776 773 772 According to Ruanda tradition, Riangombe during his human existence was a Muhima of the privileged kin group, the Bega, the highest nobility next to the royal family of the Banjeginja. His father, Babinga, was the religious head of Ruanda, and Riangombe became his successor as the chief of the ababandwa, the religious fraternity. At the same time the political king of Ruanda was Lugansu who at first made war on him but then recognized and honored him (No. 44, p. 281). Imana was very favorably disposed toward the high priest Riangombe during his lifetime. When the latter died, Imana led him to the high volcano Muhawura where Riangombe now grazed his herd and planted his tobacco (the large-leafed Senecio). The plantations, however, were destroyed by the evil spirit Niragongo who resides on the mountain of the same name [Nyiragonga]. Then Riangombe, backed by Imana, sallied out against Niragongo, destroyed his dwelling, and set fire to the mountain (the volcano Nyiragongo). Now Riangombe alternately lives undisturbed on Muhawura and Karisimbi [Mountain] where he grazes his large, sacred, milch cattle herds and where he is served by the imandwa, the spirits of the deceased members of the religious society of the ababandwa. These alone enter his "Paradise," while the souls of unblessed, profane persons (abansigo) are relegated as demons (abasimu) to Namlagira and Nyiragongo where in the "Hell" of the volcanos they lead a shadowy existence as slaves. This is the Ruanda tradition as reported by Father Arnoux (No. 44). The essential elements of this tradition have also been preserved among the Barundi. Indeed, one still finds here even the account that after his death Riangombe was buried on the

776 mountain "Vurunga wa niangombe" in Ruanda (No. 19, p. 216),
773 although the Virunga volcanos of northern Ruanda are completely
772 unknown to the Barundi. The concept of Paradise and Hell (Karisimbe and Nyiragongo) is probably of local origin in Ruanda; in Urundi nothing of this sort is known (van der Burgt, written communication).

776 Both in Urundi and Kisiba, Riangombe is mainly regarded as the protector of cattle. In Kisiba he is only worshipped by the Bahima, and his priest is always a Muhima. However, he does not enjoy special status in Ankole (No. 34, p. 520). Further, since in Ruanda and Urundi he (next to Kiranga) is the focus of worship for the religious fraternities (ababandwa) and since in Urundi he is even revered by the Batwa as their chief deity (No. 19, p. 216), one may conclude that this herdsman's god, who evidently came into the country with the Bahima, has gradually been adopted by the Negroes and has become established in the old Negro mythology of the Bahutu and Batwa.

[123] Father Loupias, however, is of a different opinion. He assumes that Riangombe was originally a deity of the Bahutu or perhaps of the Batwa, and he states that in Ruanda neither the king nor the "great" Batussi are members of the order of the imandwa which is dedicated to Riangombe (No. 28, p. 6). The latter statement, however, is true also for Urundi, but it might be interpreted as aristocratic reserve on the part of the Batussi nobles against close contact with the Bahutu or with the Batwa.

Among the other Barundi deities which have not been mentioned above, the following are most probably the old indigenous gods of the agricultural Bahutu and the Batwa: Indagarra is the god of procreative power, a "Priapus," who is worshipped especially by the Batwa; Njamurimi is regarded as the protector of the fields; Njankuru is the national god of the Basige in northwest Urundi; Ingansje appears to be a god of time, "Chronos"; Wandamutoni is the wife of Imana; Ikisjego is the son of Imana; Tusara is the god of the spirits of domestic service, "kobold"; Kwiguka is the god of lewdness; and there are many others (No. 19, pp. 216-220).

as the result of a denunciation before the German Resident, the entire kin group of the chief or the umufumu would be bound by law of the vendetta, and they would take terrible vengeance on the family of the "traitor" (No. 45, 1913, pp. 83-84).

Neither the umufumu nor the umubandwa is invited to officiate at the real cult acts of the Barundi people, at "divine services." These are a matter for the priest, the kiranga. Although among the Barundi one's entire life is simply a series of performances to fulfill religious requirements which affect all matters of existence, they nevertheless assign particularly great importance to two rituals. For this reason the kiranga has to officiate at them. One is the ceremony of the "sacred spear," the other is the act of erecting the small huts for ancestors and spirits, ivigabiro, akararo, ivitabo (No. 19, pp. 498-499).

The ceremony of the sacred spear is enacted at all the important events in the life of the Murundi, whenever protection against evil spirits is especially desirable. The father of the family is host at the ceremony and pays the officiating kiranga; relatives, friends, and neighbors act as assistants. The ritual takes place, for example, at the birth of a child, particularly at the birth of twins, if there is a serious sickness in the family, at weddings, joyous celebrations, funerals, etc. (No. 19, p. 516). Thus, it is a ceremony which may be sponsored by any Murundi who is in a position to afford the expense. This is not the cult gathering of the ababandwa, described on p. 124 above, which also takes place under the direction of the kiranga and is of a similar nature, but it is only performed by the secret society of the ababandwa.

Even the ordinary spear of the Murundi is considered sacred in a certain sense since it is the symbol of paternal power and the authority of the ancestors. Consequently the "sacred spear" guarded by the priest is the object of great devotion. In the point of this spear lives the spirit Kiranga, [135] or Indagarra, or Riangombe, depending on whether the spear has been dedicated to one or the other of the spirits. In most cases it is Kiranga. The shape of the spear is like that of any other, but one half of its blade is unpolished and black. If someone

778 Burgt was dedicated to the manes of King Ntare (No. 19,
769 p. 565) and allegedly was the residence of a large python which
825 was the receptacle of the spirit of the dead king. The snake
775 was protected and fed by its special guards. In Ruanda and Kisiba I personally heard of such official sacred monuments. They also were inhabited by a large snake which was regarded as the vehicle of the king's soul and which was regularly fed with milk by the priest. (Cf. also No. 31, pp. 107, 130.) [137] As a rule, however, no such consecrated huts are found in the sacred groves.

778 The sacred grove (imana, iteka, intatemwa) as such is regarded as an object of deepest devotion by the Murundi (No. 19, p. 77). There are no woods in most of Urundi, and hardly any trees exist in Ruanda. Consequently, the small groups of tall fig trees towering above the ridges of hills here and there are a very characteristic feature of the scenery (Plate 29a). Everywhere they indicate the site where at one time stood the residence, the kraal (lugo, urugo), of a king or chief and where the former master himself is probably buried. After the death of the owner, his homestead is abandoned, the huts fall to pieces, and only the fig trees that formed the fence of the kraal continue to grow unhindered; from that time on, nobody may [784] touch them or even cut them down. Like the onetime place of residence, these trees are regarded as sinister and sacred (imana, taboo). It is not simply pious feeling for the deceased which protects these trees of his former dwelling, for such gentle feelings are unknown to the Murundi. It is rather fear of the wrath of the spirits of the dead from whose graves the trees may have grown. This sentiment prevents the people from using the [825] trees for much needed fuel. All kinds of animals live in the thicket, [775] among them the snake which the spirit of the deceased has chosen as his new residence. Sometimes the priest of the district offers a sacrifice to the spirit by depositing food and milk for the snake.

532 The Barundi do not have any reproductions of their spirits,
● 776 demons and gods in the form of sculptured or carved figures or as drawings. This should not be regarded as proof of their lack

532 of artistic creativity which is also typical of all their other
●776 cultural possessions. The same is also true of most other East Africans. The Barundi represent their imaginary spirits only in their dances (see p. 127). They decorate them with
[781] certain symbolic emblems and pay homage to them, motivated by a mixture of fear and calculation.

Finally, religious concepts and emotions are also re-
784 flected in many "superstitious" customs with which the life of
262 the Barundi abounds. Most of these customs are designed to repel evil spirits. Those which deal with diet, care of the body, etc., frequently seem to the European observer to be hygienic precautions. There are many rules and taboos (umusiro) pertaining to food. As has been mentioned above, all Barundi may eat beef, although it is quite a rare treat for them (p. 46). Only the Batwa eat goat meat; a Muhutu will eat it only in rare cases. Nobody, however, is permitted to eat chicken meat, venison, or the flesh of numerous other animals which for various reasons are considered impure. Also, there are the food taboos on the totem animals of the different clans (p. 103). Few people eat mutton, and only the tribes living on Lake Tanganyika eat fish. Blacksmiths must abstain from eating pork (No. 23, 1914, pp. 111 ff.). Incidentally, no woman
[843] may watch a blacksmith at work. A pregnant Murundi wife is not permitted to eat meat, beans, sweet potatoes, beer, or salt; she may only eat boiled manioc, hot maize gruel, ripe bananas, and peanuts. However, a pregnant Mutwa woman may eat and drink as usual. Nobody may warm or boil milk
[825] since otherwise the cows would become sick. Likewise, a person who has eaten peanuts or peas may [138] not drink milk on the same day since the cows would become sick. Nobody may eat vegetables and milk at the same time since this would harm the cows which gave the milk. The Banjaruanda, Banjankole, Banjampororó, and Banjoro have the same superstitions (No. 30, Vol. II, pp. 514, 534; No. 19, p. 6). In
[765] Urundi, after the father of a family has died, his widow and children do not eat salt until the period of mourning has passed, and they do not cut their hair.

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distinguished among its peoples: pastoralist Batutsi[1] (about 10 per cent. of the population), agriculturalist Bahutu (about 85 per cent.), and Batwa, hunters and potters (about 5 per cent.).

Man and the Material World

The world in which men are placed and which they know through their senses was created *ex nihilo* by *Imana*. The Ruanda word *kurema* means to produce, to make. It is here rendered 'to create' because our informants say that there was nothing before *Imana* made the world. This belief concerning the origin of the material world is universal and clear. To any question on this point, the answer is ready.

The Banyarwanda assert that we do not see the whole of the material world which was created at that time. The world of our experience is flat; its limits are far away and made of fences like the ones we see around kraals. On these fences there is a big rock which is the sky we see. Beyond the rock there is another world (*ijuru*) similar to our own, with hills, trees, and rivers. This world may be said to be heavenly only in the sense that it is above the sky: it is not a paradise but rather a richer duplicate of our world. Under the soil on which we tread there is yet another world (*ikuzimu*) also conceived as similar to our own. There is nothing infernal about it. The material universe is thus a kind of three-storied construction. It is not impossible to go from one floor to another: some people and animals came from the world above to the intermediate world and, according to some legends, one man at least went to the lower world.

In our world the moon and the stars (which are kinds of glow-worms) stay high up in the sky. The sun rises in the morning and in the evening reaches the end of the world where a powerful man kills it and cuts it into pieces. Then he throws the main bone across the vault of heaven to the East where it grows up and the following morning the same process begins again.

In essentials our world was created as we see it now, but there have been some changes in the course of its history. Some hills were raised up by the kings of Ruanda; the formation of Kivu Lake is accounted for in different folk-tales. Cattle, which rank so high in the Ruanda scale of values, also made a special appearance on the intermediate world. The stories give more than one version of their origin but they agree on their arrival in a world already constituted and inhabited by men. According to some tales, creatures did not originally have the same bodily form as they have now. It is said, for instance, that horns were given to animals after they had been created.

This, and a belief that the world is now slowly degenerating, getting old (people's stature is decreasing, cows give less milk), suggest that the Ruanda conception of the universe is not a wholly static one. The world does not remain the same, it is in process of evolution. However, when direct

[1] In this paper, following the common use, we have kept the prefixes of the Ruanda words, such as *mu* for the singular and *ba* for the plural.

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questions are asked, it appears that this conception of the life of the universe has not been the subject of speculation and is not of great importance to the Banyarwanda.

Without *Imana* the world would not continue to exist and his action is necessary to maintain life. *Imana's* action, however, is not manifested in particular interventions; it is conceived rather as an underlying force which sustains the whole universe but does not interfere in the development of the life of nature. Seeds are put into the ground and after some time plants come up, the banana-trees produce their yields, the cows breed. All this is the normal course of things and we may expect the recurrence of these events at the proper times. This universal order, indeed, is not independent of *Imana*. He made plants grow and animals multiply, but he does not have to act to give fertility in each case. The scholastic distinction between prime cause and secondary causes can very well be applied to Ruanda conceptions. *Imana* acts as the prime cause of the universe and therefore any event may be imputed to him. On the other hand, nature itself includes the secondary causes which account for the regular unfolding of its course.

But this natural order is not unalterable. *Imana* remains master of the rules he has established. There are numerous stories of miracles worked by *Imana* (a stick becomes a cow, teeth are granted to a girl who had none, &c.). Other beings besides *Imana* may act on nature: the spirits of the dead and even some men, the sorcerers. They may prevent somebody's beans from growing, they may have a man or a cow struck down by lightning. In particular, rain, so important in this country where rainfall is very irregular, has been regarded as under man's control. There were rain-makers (*bavubyi*) who had the dangerous responsibility of regulating rainfall.

Natural forces—rain, wind, hail, storms—are not considered as persons having desires and intentions that could be influenced by prayers or offerings. It seems that only thunder is personalized, and is regarded as a king (*mwami*). When a person has been struck by lightning, it is said that the Thunder-King has honoured his subjects with a visit and has taken one of them with him. Lightning receives the same salute as the king of Ruanda.

Banyarwanda implicitly distinguish between the regular course of nature and more or less unexpected events. Towards the former they assume a rational attitude. They do not look to the invisible world to account for the alternation of the phases of the moon, the growth of plants, the breeding of cattle. These phenomena are explicable on the level of secondary causes. Neither *Imana* nor the occult powers interfere in the normal course of material nature. It would be misleading to conceive of the Ruanda people as 'primitives' living in an irrational world where every phenomenon is an enchantment demanding explanation in terms of an intervention of the invisible world. They look at the world in its regular course in the same way as does a product of Western culture.

Of course, a Munyarwanda could not explain the interplay and the exact action of secondary causes as a Western scientist would do. But neither

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Man and the Non-material World

Imana, the Creator

Imana, the creator, is a person. He is conceived as an intelligence, a will, an emotivity. He is extremely powerful: 'the plant protected by *Imana* is never hurt by wind', '*Imana* has very long arms', '*Imana* goes above any shield'. He is non-material. His action influences the whole world; but Ruanda is his home where he comes to spend the night. He is always invoked as 'God of Ruanda' (*Imana y'i Ruanda*).

Imana is essentially good: 'your enemy is digging a pitfall for you, *Imana* prepares your exit', '*Imana* gives, he does not sell'. This is why he takes care of men and why there is no cult in his honour. He is so good, I have been told, that he does not require any offering.

There is a special creative act of *Imana* at the beginning of each person's life. Impregnation in itself would not be sufficient to produce a new human being. This is why the young wife, at evening, leaves a few drops of water in a jar. *Imana*, as a potter, needs some water to shape the clay into a child in her womb. Then, after birth, *Imana* decides what life is to be for that individual: happy or unhappy. If, later on, a man is miserable, poverty-stricken, in bad health, it is said that he was created by *Ruremakwaci*. This way of speaking has led some observers to understand that besides *Imana*, there was another creator, perhaps subordinate, perhaps an evil spirit. As a matter of fact, *Ruremakwaci* is the name given to *Imana* when he does not create very successfully, when 'he is tired', or, for some inscrutable reason, decides that a certain destiny will be unhappy. This is consistent with the Ruanda linguistic habit of assigning different names to one cause according to its different effects.

Imana's influence is thought to be always beneficial for human beings. It happens very often that obstacles are placed in the way of his action by malevolent agencies of the invisible world, but from him only good things come. This is not completely consistent with the belief in an unfortunate predestination by *Imana*. It should be noted, first, that the theory of predestination has not a very deep impact on the attitude of Banyarwanda. A person who thinks himself unhappy, and might thus suspect that he has been predestined to a miserable life, does not seem to be submerged by a feeling of doom. Unless he is brought to despair by a situation from which there is no escape, he will go on living and trying to improve his condition. Secondly, this inconsistency will be better understood if we consider the attitude of Banyarwanda towards the king (the *Mwami*) in similar circumstances. The *Mwami*, the supreme authority is good, yet he may be harmful and cruel to some of his subjects. As his power is absolute, as he is magically identified with Ruanda itself, he may never be criticized. Thus the victims of some arbitrary royal decision, and their friends, go on saying that the king is good but that his favourite counsellor is very bad and is responsible for what they suffer. As might be expected, in Ruanda God is conceived

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according to the image of the *Mwami*, and thus when some misfortune occurs, the blame is put on another name of God or on the ghosts or sorcerers.

The beneficent action of *Imana* is general and remote. *Imana* is the source of all gifts, but he does not interfere very much in individual lives unless he is invoked. He is not the vigilant deity whom no single detail of the lives of his creatures can escape and who, when he acts, takes into account all the antecedents of the situation. There is a story of a man who borrowed beans from different people. When repayment of the loans was demanded, he was always able by his wits to avoid fulfilling his obligations. One creditor—Death—insists on being paid and pursues him. The debtor, when fleeing, calls upon *Imana* who saves him.

Imana—as is illustrated by this tale—is not the guardian of ethics and social order. He is not offended when somebody is robbed, but only if the offence is directed against himself, as when somebody disobeys a particular order of his or abuses his name. Then he punishes the offender by sending him misfortunes during his earthly life.

The Spirits of the Dead

The spirits of the dead (*bazimu*), with whom *Imana* has no closer relationships than he has with living people, constitute the second category of non-material beings. They continue the individuality of living persons and have the same names. It is usual to say: 'when he will be a *muzimu*. . . .' Though non-material, they are localized by their activity, in contrast to *Imana* who, having a much wider range of action, cannot be so precisely localized. They live in the lower world whose ruler is *Nyamuzinda* ('the one with whom one is forgotten'). Banyarwanda have not elaborated a very detailed picture of post-mortem existence. Although, according to some informants, the deceased kings of Ruanda constitute a kind of governing body in the underworld, there are no social distinctions. Life is neither pleasant nor unhappy. The *bazimu* do not drink, eat, or mate but their existence in other respects is similar to that in the world of the living. The *bazimu* sometimes come back to this world, returning to the places where they used to live. An ancestor and some other spirits may stay permanently in the hut where their descendants live or in the small huts made for them in the enclosure around the dwelling.

Whatever their temper when they were in this world, the *bazimu* are bad. Direct ancestors in both lines (although the system of descent is patrilineal) are believed to protect their living descendants, if they showed them proper filial behaviour when they were in this world, if they observe prohibitions and avoidances and if they do not forget to make offerings. But all other *bazimu* belonging to one's patrilineage (*mulyango*) are always harmful. The *bazimu* of other families are less detrimental except where there are feuds between the families. Ghosts are thus essentially malevolent towards the living. At best they are not actively injurious.

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In order not to irritate the dead various observances and interdicts must be complied with. The 'cult' of the *bazimu* is accordingly aimed at appeasing them. They are frequently offered a few drops of milk or hydromel. Sometimes they require the immolation of a goat or even a bull. A girl spends some time in the small hut dedicated to a *muzimu* in order that he may enjoy having a woman. Other practices are, however, more difficult to interpret. Water may be given to the *muzumu* while at the same time he is told very loudly that it is milk. The explanation given by most informants is that *bazimu* are rather stupid and that these mock offerings are not given to the direct ancestors, who are respected, but only to collaterals who, as *bazimu*, are hated. However, it is not very clear how one can at the same time fear the powerful *bazimu* and deceive them so grossly.

Among the *bazimu*, a small group, *Ryangombe* and his *imandwa*, is particularly powerful and important. *Ryangombe* is said to have been the chief of a small band of friends and clients. He was accidentally killed by a buffalo during a hunting party. In order not to leave *Ryangombe*, his friends threw themselves on the bull's horns. *Imana* gave them a special place, the Karisimbi, a former volcano, where they have a notably more agreeable life than the other *bazimu*. To have the privilege of joining them there, Banyarwanda have to be initiated into the sect (*kubandwa*). The members of the sect believe that non-initiates go after death into an active volcano, the Nyiragongo, where they suffer torments of fire. We have here an interesting instance of conflicting ideologies in a non-literate society: the common belief that all *bazimu* reside in the underworld and the belief of initiates, who are extremely numerous, in a mildly paradisal life for themselves and a hell for other people. During their earthly sojourn the initiates have other advantages, for the powerful *imandwa* do not harm them and indeed protect them from the injurious activities of other spirits.

The relations between *Ryangombe* and *Imana* seem to be conceived as those between a client (*mugaragu*) and his patron (*shebuja*), persons who are linked by that typical Ruanda institution called *buhake*, in which a man in an inferior situation in the scale of wealth and social power asks another to grant him his protection and the possession of some cows; in return the client becomes his patron's man and owes him various services. *Ryangombe* is believed to be protected by *Imana* and to act more or less as his intermediary with regard to the initiates. But *Imana* is not present in *Ryangombe's* paradise. The cult of *Ryangombe* has importance as a force of social cohesion. Batutsi, Bahutu, and Batwa may all be initiated. This function is quite overtly stressed: *Ryangombe* has said himself that he should be called upon by everybody.

Diviners and Sorcerers

Two categories of men have special relations with the invisible world: diviners (*bapfumu*) and sorcerers (*barozi*). The former are interpreters of *Imana's* will, which they can discern in the figures made by knuckle-bones,

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who steal cattle, or set fire to huts, or commit adultery are punished by the political or family authorities. Social sanctions are not only physically enforced penalties, such as corporal punishment and compensations, but also the unorganized reactions of the people who know the delinquent: kin, neighbours, clients, and lord. For the Batutsi, for whom reputation stands high in the scale of values, this is extremely important. According to our informants, the fear of being considered a man without loyalty or without dignity, the dread of being despised by one's family, prevent many breaches of rules. To use Kluckhohn's terminology, we may say that Ruanda's is a shame-culture. But it is also a guilt-culture. When a Munyarwanda has transgressed some rule so secretly that there is not the slightest chance of his being found out and incurring punishment and shame, he nevertheless feels guilty and knows, our informants told us, that his action is bad. When a child has disobeyed his father without the latter's knowledge, he thinks not only of the unpleasant consequences that the discovery of his misbehaviour might produce but also (and some informants say 'mainly') of the wickedness of the act itself. The Ruanda word for conscience, *kamera*, means something that is internally felt. It is situated in the heart.

That the Banyarwanda have a 'conscience' will not be rated as a great discovery by some. But since some recent studies, such as Kluckhohn's on the Navaho, have stressed the fact that, in some cultures, submission to rules seems to be realized almost entirely through a rational concern to avoid punishment or shame, it does not seem superfluous to consider how far observance of rules is, or is not, linked to ethical principles and feelings of guilt.

Let us now attempt to indicate more precisely how moral wrong is conceived in the Ruanda culture. As has been already mentioned, *Imana* is not the guardian of the moral order. Sometimes he seems to be regarded as its author in the sense that he might have decided that men should not steal; but it is clear that when a man steals another man's cows, *Imana* is not personally offended. Those who are offended are those who have been wronged by the action, or those who had issued an order which has been disobeyed. When *Imana* has not been directly injured (as by blasphemies), or when the injury done to another has not been specifically forbidden by him, he is not thought to be offended. The victim could, however, ask *Imana* to punish the wrongdoer and if he then became ill, it would be said that *Imana* had punished him.

The other agencies of the supernatural world have even slighter relations with ethical values. The *bazimu* are naturally malevolent and punish only those actions which they take to be directed against themselves. A way to honour the spirit of somebody who had been a thief during his life was to simulate a robbery. *Ryangombe* and his fellows were not models of morality during their earthly existence and they did not care about the ethics of their followers. Nor was there any punishment after death. For those who believe that there are two kinds of life after death—happy or unhappy—the

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qualification for the happy one is not to live a blameless life on earth, but to undergo initiation into the *Ryangombe* cult.

Thus the ethics of the Banyarwanda are not integrated on a religious basis such as the will of God. What is the principle of integration, or rather, we should first ask, are their ethical conceptions integrated? On the surface they consist, like any moral code, of a multiplicity of prohibitions, orders, and exhortations. Have they achieved a synthesis of these separate elements by reducing the multiplicity to one or a few principles? Or, what amounts to the same thing, could they give a definition of good and evil?

In Ruanda a great number of particular rules are subsumed under general principles such as: do not do what is harmful to people of your group or of your country; do what people related to you would like; submit to your superiors. Principles such as these are already on a higher level of abstraction than the particular rules. When informants are asked to account for a given rule or principle they give as the final justification: 'It has always been done that way in Ruanda.' We may perhaps express the Ruanda definition of good and evil in these terms: That is good (or evil) which tradition has defined as good (or evil).

Tradition is indeed a powerful force in cultures which, as in Ruanda, have been isolated for centuries from world currents. Each generation is more conscious of the importance of what it has received from the preceding one than is possible when much of what constitutes its way of life comes not from its ancestors but from some other social tradition. Moreover, their relations with their neighbours whom they frequently subjugated have persuaded Banyarwanda of the excellence of the ways of life transmitted by their forefathers. In such a situation the traditional character of a rule appears to be sufficient justification. If the ancestors, who were so wise, behaved in that way it would be preposterous to question it.

But it would be misleading to picture the Banyarwanda as following blindly the moral rules framed in a remote past without having any idea of their purpose. Some old men have a clear understanding of the social significance of certain rules. They explained, for example, that the duality of the rules concerning adultery committed by the husband or by the wife was accounted for by the importance of the wife's function in procreation. She has thus a greater responsibility than the husband for maintaining the integrity of the family.

Does this kind of thinking extend so far as independence of tradition? Some informants told us that, apart from the authority of custom, some actions were thought of as dishonourable in themselves. But these informants were Christians and, apparently, very much influenced by their religion. Moreover, they could not quote a clear case of conflict between tradition and ethics.

No moral code can achieve an absolute character in all its precepts. Prohibitions and commands frequently relate only to certain categories of persons and situations. Even the Christian Western ethic, which realizes to

316 The industries of Ruanda are very primitive. The country is poor in iron ore, which is hardly to be found except in the Buberuka and Kanage. The Banyarwanda extract it mostly from the Bunyabungu, southwest of Lake Kivu.

[326] They make hoes, spears, billhooks, and rudimentary knives out of it. /55/

265 Basketry is more highly developed, but except for a few small articles made rather artfully by Batutsi women in their leisure time, this industry is not especially remarkable. Workmen and artisans seek to make only what is practical. The making of pottery, as we 323 said before, is almost exclusively the prerogative of the Batwa or the Bayovu, a Muhutu /Bahutu/ clan despised almost as much as the Batwa ethnic group.

462 Women have set tasks as well as men. While they take care of the children, prepare meals, keep the hut orderly and clean, the husband milks the cows and repairs the huts. Furthermore, they are often seen working together in the fields or gathering cereals (1).

1. Grammaire Kirundi /Kirundi Grammar/ by Rev. Fr. Ménard of the White Fathers. Maison-Carrée (Algiers).

What the author says of the Barundi in his preface applies almost in toto to the Banyarwanda. The two lands and the two nations are very much alike. Except for a few small differences, the language is the same.

771 From a religious point of view, the Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ ● 776 is extremely superstitious. He acknowledges the existence of a supreme being (Imana), creator of all things, but is not much preoccupied with him in his everyday life because that being does no harm.

769 He cares for the ancestral spirits, whom he fears. He believes, 775 indeed, that the spirits of the dead are the authors of the evils that befall him.

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ibgami, "at the king's." In speaking of the ancient royal residences, they use the noun umurwa, plural imirwa, or else ikigabiro, plural ibigabiro. As for the term umuhango (plural imihango), it signifies "mores, customs, traditions," hence the name Abanyamihango given to the "keepers of the customs."

[642] We remind the reader that the native government is an absolute and hereditary monarchy.

643 The sovereign is master of the land and all it contains; he deals with the life and goods of his subjects as he pleases. Until recently his power knew no bounds of any sort and was wholly dependent upon [776] his whims or good will. Imana (God) was no more powerful than he. [687] Any attempt to draw a comparison between the two was formerly regarded as a crime of high treason. God and the King could, at best, be one and the same person.

641 The subjects, therefore, tended to be regarded as things from which to draw as much pleasure and well-being as possible.

Their own worth and usefulness were assessed and measured only with reference to the king. Let us add that the welfare of the kingdom, although it was not disregarded, could only come second in the thoughts of the king. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, 644 the dignitaries of the realm to whom the king assigned the government of the provinces were compelled to spend most of their time at court. The Hamitic princes were very eager to keep the nobility close to them. They were always on the alert and daily surveyed the lords and courtiers who surrounded them (2). The latter belong /349/ almost

2. From Saint Simon we learn that the situation was the same under Louis XIV. "It is a demerit

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lost)... (p. 203).

"In the Bunyoro the Bachwezi cult was superimposed on the local religion whose primary objects of worship were no other than the spirits of the ancestors and the Creator himself."

(Luhanga, Nyamuhanga, among the Bahima of Uganda), p. 218.

(Sub-army /sub L'armee?/ (society) of the mbandwa).

The same author speaks also of Muzana, the servant girl honored by the initiates.

Fr. Césard, in turn, lists the same figures, including Rungu (Nyabirungu among the Banyarwanda) in his study, "Comment les Bahaya interprètent leurs origines /How the Bahaya Interpret their Origins/," Anthropos, 1927.

Yes, if the legends are to be believed, but the details they provide are not sufficiently accurate to make us accept the reality of their existence. What are the bonds of kinship or subordination which unite Ryangombe and the figures who are grouped at his side in the worship and ceremonies held in his honor?

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There does exist a sort of mythology that classifies some of those figures, but others were introduced into some of the provinces at a later time and are more or less unknown. Some of them nevertheless have historical associations, and their claimed patronage arouses certain conjectures. /361/ We wonder whether the Banyarwanda may have introduced into this sort of religious pantheon sorcerers, ancient petty kings, and political figures who played an important role in the land. The Blacks, being superstitious, timorous, eager to avert the wrath of ancestral spirits and anxious to gain their protection, have

173 rendered them a special worship. The Hamites were perhaps the first
776 to organize this religious group in the newly conquered land. The
794 Bahutu (or Bantu) were not excluded from it. Their admission was a political act on the part of the immigrants (1).

> 1. It is not impossible that the Hamites found the imwandwa society already organized when they arrived in Uganda, and later in Ruanda, and that they immediately adopted it and had themselves initiated into it to serve their own ends. As we can see, the problems relating to the origins of this religious society remain unsolved. Any hypothesis may be offered until the day when light will be brought on the subject.

By conviction and perhaps also in a spirit of diplomacy, in order to win their subjects over, the conquering Batutsi, killers of the magician-petty kings, did not hesitate to invoke the spirits of their victims and to honor them in cult ceremonies.

The Romans acted similarly toward foreign divinities, and admitted them willingly into the pantheon of the Empire.

According to this interpretation, should Ryangombe and his initial companions be placed in the category of aboriginal princes? If one accepts the facts set forth in the Banyarwanda legend, such a supposition is not impossible. The mythological narrative represents Ryangombe as a sort of independent prince (umuhinza), whose residence was at Kibingo in the small province of Nyakale. The legend says that Ryangombe went hunting to please his wife Nyanzige, daughter of the great king, Ruganzu II, who had asked him for a buffalo hide in which to wrap (ingobyi) her newborn child. He found one of those /362/ formidable animals and even wounded it, but was charged by the beast and killed at a spot about two hours distant from his dwelling,

173 Nyabikenke, which became thereby historical and accursed. His sons
776 and companions avenged his death and killed Nyanzige, who was the
794 indirect cause of the misfortune. The initiates of the Ryangombe cult also deified Ruganzu's daughter and made her a liberator (Umutabazi). It may have been the children and followers of Ryangombe who ennobled the end of this unfortunate woman for political reasons, so as to escape the anger and reprisals of the vindictive monarch.

Nyanzige is designated in ritual ceremonies by the name of Nyagishya or Inzobe, that is to say, "pale-faced woman," on account of her complexion.

The Bagoyi attribute Ryangombe's death to another one of his relatives, a young girl whom he had previously seduced after offering her a heady drink of hydromel. "I will have my revenge," cried the adolescent girl. "You will find me along the way, changed into a buffalo, and your blood will pay for my dishonor."

In accordance with local custom, the family of the unlucky girl chased her away. She found refuge in a wooded area where she bore a male child.

Ryangombe had gone out hunting when he suddenly met with the angered mother. She changed herself into a buffalo and pierced the king of the Imwanda with her horns.

The Banyarwanda like to ascribe to Ruganzu II most historical events and the origin of a number of practices and customs. What aspects of the afore-mentioned legend should we keep in mind? The interpretation of the facts is far from easy. The reign of Ruganzu II is relatively recent. On the other hand, the cult of Ryangombe is found in neighboring areas although the details vary. It is difficult to accept all the narrative details as historical. The religious society seems to /363/ date much farther back than the reign of this great monarch (1).

1. Ryangombe himself may have been only the perpetuator of these rites and may have practiced them by virtue of the law of succession, if it is assumed that he was a petty king (umuhinza), or on the authority of the Hamitic potentates.

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●776 The figures honored by the members of this secret society rank as demigods. Their protection is believed to be effective in the various circumstances of public and family life. As a result, their disciples appeal to them for the obtaining of any material benefit, recovery from illness, ownership of cattle, good relations with chiefs or neighbors, triumph over enemies, protection against bewitchers or spell casters, fecundity, etc.

[576] In order to reach these goals, the initiates respectfully come to the man who plays the role of Ryangombe, greet him, kneel at his feet, address his companions, and offer them gifts.

There is a traditional way to honor these spirits of varying rank and position. No rite is overlooked. Ceremonial dress, gestures, words, offerings, everything is foreseen and prescribed by immutable laws.

Each of the "patrons" has a peculiar costume and special insignias which the man who plays his role must perforce take into account. They are offered gifts of various kinds, and chants or "paeans" are sung, recalling to the spectators the brilliant deeds of their protectors.

1. Ryangombe is represented as seated on a native chair, with a cutlass suspended from his neck. One sets down at his side a [273] vessel full of lustral water and a large jar of pombe, beer made of sorghum or banana juice.

The ladies who wish to honor him hold in their hands a house- [198] hold spatula (umwuko). His adepts imitate the call of the hyena to praise him (2). /364/

> 2. Is this a vestige of the ancient tribal totems? We cannot be sure.

2. Binego, son of Ryangombe, is called the "Liberator" because he saved his father from ruin and dishonor.

The man who plays his role holds a spear and stick and has a pipe (urwika in the language of the initiates) and a small gourd full of banana beer.

His peculiar cry of "a ba ba ba..., " pronounced in a virile tone, recalls that Binego had great strength and invincible courage.

3. Mugasa is Ryangombe's son-in-law.

His adepts imitate him by flinging two goatskins over their body and by adopting as their peculiar insignia a household spatula holding a piece of sorghum bread. Mugasa had a weakness for sorghum bread and goat meat. To honor him his disciples adopt the same customs and habits as their master. For some reason, they clink a necklace made of small pieces of dried wood which is usually strung around the neck of children to amuse them or keep them from crying (inkondo z' ibichuma).

His special cry is "yee yee ye...."

4. Nyabirungu, son of Ryangombe, was a hunter.

His impersonator rings a small bell (of the type strung around the neck of dogs), symbol of the hunt, and cries "i i i..." to recall that Nyabirungu would return satisfied from the forest with a large provision of game.

5. Luhanga, son of Ryangombe.

He symbolizes filial love because he rescued his mother from poverty when she was abandoned by Ryangombe, built her a beautiful hut, and provided for her needs.

He is represented in the ceremonies with a milk container full of beer, perhaps in order to recall the happy mother who, thanks to him, no longer lacked anything.

6. Nyakiriro, son of Ryangombe.

7. Kagoro, like his brother Nyabirungu, loved to hunt, hence the dogs at his side. He had /365/ the habit of covering his head with a piece of mpuzu, a fabric made of ficus bark, of drinking out of a hollowed half gourd fashioned for this purpose (uruho), and of using a twig (umutozo) to blend curdled milk properly before taking it. Those who invoke him feel that they honor him by imitating him, that is to say, by copying his gestures and deeds.

8. Muzana is represented as a slave girl in the ceremonies.

She is honored by the Batutsi, who represent her by the side of a cow who has never lost a calf (inka y' issugi), a churning gourd, and a small pat of rancid butter (isimbo y'amavuta).

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776 9. Nkonjo, another enslaved servant girl, who was first to bring the sad news of Ryangombe's death.

She is offered a broom as a gift, the symbol of her work as a slave, and a small storage granary or some produce as a reminder that she was in charge of watching over the harvest and of attending to the household tasks.

10. Mashira.

The Banyarwanda, forgetful of their own history, regard him as Ryangombe's child. We have better reasons to believe that he was no other than the celebrated magician-petty king acknowleged as one of the most powerful sorcerers.

[771] In ritual sessions, his representatives assume a majestic bearing and hold in their hand an iron spear made all of a piece (igihosho), which is a sorcerer's emblem symbolizing strength. His followers [415] offer him an earthen pitcher of special design, with two openings and a drinking tube in each to permit the spectators to drink the hydromel it contains in honor of the magician.

His peculiar cry is "shi shi shi ...."

11. Mutwa, one of Ryangombe's companions, is invoked especially by the Batwa. /366/

This figure seems to have been invented for the sake of the [782] Batwa. He is offered gifts of beans, meat, milk, and sorghum bread which the members of this despised group share with delight.

The selection of these particular foods, which are offered first as a sacrifice to Mutwa, aims at pleasing him by satisfying his hunger. This is because the Negrillos, whose prototype (or ancestor) he portrays, do not always eat their fill, and these foods appeal to them as the ideal dishes they most desire.

New members were added later to this gallery of demigods. We shall mention only the best-known ones.

1. The Liberator Kibogo, son of King Ndahiro, is often invoked for rain.

[782] 2. The Bagoyi, lake-shore dwellers, offer libations of beer to Mwungeri, son of Nyankaka, who perished in the Lake Kivu disaster.

3. The inhabitants of the Bwana-Mkali honor in turn Rumana

194 and Mulengetwe, old historical figures who may have been notorious.
● 771 4. The "Munyoro" figure was invented for the same superstitious reasons which cause the Blacks to honor the spirits of the dead and more particularly the souls of those who distinguished themselves for good or for evil in the course of their mortal existence.

The figure of Munyoro was probably included in the ceremonies after the defeat of the Banyoro.

5. The inhabitants of the Nkombo isles render special worship to Muhima and Nyirangenge.

Muhima, a synonym for Mututsi, symbolizes the Batutsi conquerors who seized the isles, and Nyirangenge, a feminine figure, stands for the Batutsi ladies or personifies the intelligence of the Hamites.

6. Nyarwambari, son of Mulema and grandson /367/ of Ngwegwe, figures among Ryangombe's followers. The initiates do not have much to say about him.

7. Bukiranzuki figures among the daughters of the founder. During the ceremonies, the women who worship her wear on their heads the tail of an animal known under the name of igiharangu.

The members of this religious pantheon are numerous. They include, aside from the afore-mentioned figures, the founder's father and grandfather, Babinga and Nyundo; his wives, Kajumba, mother of Binego, Karyango, mother of Bukiranzuki, and Gachubya, mother of Nyabirungu; Nyirakabali, his daughter, whom he gave in marriage to one of his companions; and Lubindankima ("the man who girds his loins with a monkey pelt"). The inhabitants of the Bugoyi have it that this latter figure, who was probably invented out of whole cloth, was the friend and confidant of one of Ruganzu II's great victims, the famous Gatabirora, nicknamed Bilikunkomo, whose actions and deeds have been dramatized and romanticized (1).

1. Cf. Book III /not translated/.

In the meetings of the initiates there is also mention of
[825] Gassankomo, "the man who wraps himself in colobus pelts." This is the honorific name given to Kagoro, whose impersonator must for some

778 824 211 religious character was already known through Captain Hermann, and they are referred to simply as Imana trees.

It seems to be chiefly the Batutsi who venerate the memorial trees. The fig trees on the heights are most numerous and most beautiful in places where the Batutsi have the greatest power. On the other hand, it is said that sometimes at night Bahutu secretly take wood from the sacred trees. The Batwa, who fear no one and who have also preserved their independence in spiritual matters, do [301] this quite openly in the daytime, but there are not enough of them to destroy the trees and change the landscape.

● 776 Imana and Batabazi. In our general discussion of the interlacustrine region [not translated], we pointed out that the spirits of dead kings and rulers have a special place among the manes. They are distinguished from the undifferentiated mass of bazimu by their greater power. They are known and feared in larger circles. This is the case, for example, with the spirit of Kimeni in Kisaka. It is not impossible that from this we shall be able to explain the contrast between the rule of Ryangombe in the underworld, which seems to be patterned after the organization of Batutsi states, and the familial anarchy of the ordinary manes. However, it is doubtful whether the central figure of the Ruanda pantheon, the creator of the world, Imana, can be associated with the spirits of the dead. He probably must be considered as derived from foreign influence. Perhaps this also explains the underworld residence of the court of Ryangombe, whereas the rest of the bazimu remain with their living relatives.

776 782 Imana is the lord of lightning, thunder, and rain. One addresses him with the words: "Nabone Imana yandemie ikalema tata, na sokokuru, na sokuruza, na mukaka, na mukakuruzu, na mama. Ikankiza, nkuko yabakidjidji! (Favor me, Imana, who created my father, and my grandfather, and the father of my grandfather, and my grandmother, and the mother of my grandmother, and my mother. He has healed me, how he has healed me!)"

No sacrifices are made to Imana. Thus, he plays no part in the cult and satisfies only, if we may so express it, a philosophical need.

776 Even though Imana is supposedly the creator, there are no
773 special tales about his relation to the other powerful spirits, for example, Ryangombe. The Banyaruanda seem to have an altogether vague and indefinite idea of him. The strangest thing is the story of his appearance on earth in the form of a child who was even whiter than kaolin (runoni). The child had supernatural power. Among other things, he changed water into milk. Imana created the first human beings. The first man married his sister, but neither of them had a father or a mother. Imana gave them fire.

Lieutenant Von Parisch (1) listed Lugira, Lulema, and

1. Parisch, F.R.Von, "Zwei Reisen durch Ruanda 1902 bis 1903," Globus, Vol. 86 (1904), p. 78.

Kihanga as synonyms for Imana.

The myths about Imana seem to be less known or kept more secret, at least in Kissaka, than the stories about other spirits.

778 [302] Every Mututsi is said to revere a particularly sacred
825 bull in his herd, which has a secret connection with Imana. The sacred bull of Musinga was allegedly very fierce and attacked many people. It is maintained that those who were attacked by the bull were recognized by the animal as enemies of the king. If they came through alive, they were in former times punished with death. This custom has been given up in the last three or four years, probably as the result of greater contact with Europeans, but the unfortunate ones are still in very bad repute.

778 We must not forget that the vessels containing remnants of chickens and the fat of sacrificed sheep, which the Batutsi wear around their necks, are also called "Imana."

776 Even more puzzling than Imana are the batabazi in the
773 Ruanda pantheon. I have already mentioned them in the chapter on the history of Ruanda. Father L. Classe told me that the myth of the flood as well as the idea of the sacrifice of an individual life to save mankind appear in the batabazi legends. The people survive the flood in a hut made watertight with earth.

The batabazi are Batutsi because they are associated with the reigning family.

Ryangombe and his Bagaragu. Ryangombe with his bagaragu (clients) and relatives plays the most important role in the Ruanda cult.

We have already expressed the opinion that in the traditions about Ryangombe there is a memory of an historical hero. In favor of this view we have the story (umugani) given below (which does not say much), and in addition, the fact that Kakuku, Mugasha, Kagoro, and Rubaga are mentioned among his retinue. The latter three are semihistorical personalities and, according to our research, belong to the family that ruled in Bunyoro before the Babito, whereas Kakuku is probably identical with Bukuku from the older Bunyoro dynasty.

Ryangombe's nearest relatives do not seem to play any special role and are mentioned only in reference to the hero. Hence we shall only list them. His father was Ndema, and his grandfather, Migongo. Babinga was his mother, and Nyundo, his grandmother. His wife, Nyakisha, presented him with a child called kachumu kato kato kavira imyuna mumbuga, "a small, small spear stained with blood up to the hilt." According to other accounts, his wife was Kadjumba, and their son, Binego.

In other accounts we find somewhat different statements. Lieutenant Von Parisch (1) calls Ryangombe's wife Njawirungu

1. Parisch, F.R. Von, "Zwei Reisen durch Ruanda 1902 bis 1903," Globus, Vol. 86 (1904), p. 10.

and his father Bawinda which [303] he has probably confused with the name of the mother, Babinga.

Captain Von Beringe (1), on the other hand, calls

1. Beringe, Captain Von, an account of his journeys in the region of the Kirunga volcanoes, Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten 1901, p. 37.

Ryangombe's grandfather Nyundo, his father Bavinga, and his wife Nina Ryangombe. The last name, however, simply means "mother of Ryangombe."

The most important bagaragu (clients) of Ryangombe are Binego, Kavuna, Mugasha, Kakuku, Kagoro, Senyakazana, and Rubaga.

Their subordination to Ryangombe is always strongly emphasized. We can see this also in the fact that before sacrifices can be made to them sacrifices must be made to Ryangombe. Rubaga is the only exception. One can bring him gifts without first having made offerings to Ryangombe.

Special forms and ceremonies are observed in offerings made to these individual spirits.

In sacrificing to Binego the person stands with lowered head and murmurs: "Binego bya Kadjumba nyamunega amafizi amabuguma akapfa numulindu. Lukaraba nkaba n'inkuba yadjandja. Ulwamba lw'impiri namaganya y'inkuba aseseka ntanyobwe umushaidja mukanya." I could not find out what this means.

Small straw huts are built to Kavuna. He is offered banana beer with added honey in twin-necked pots. Formerly the sacrificer covered himself with a leopard skin. As he makes the sacrifice, he stretches out his hands and sings: "Kavuna ushime ntango yawe (Kavuna, accept my offering)."

If a person makes a sacrifice to Mugasha, he winds the bark of banana stalks around his legs, arms, and neck. He holds the thin end of a stick in his right hand, stamps his feet, beats the ground with the stick, and repeats: "Mugasha akatema katoke niribiriri, niribirimbo."

Kakuku was an old paralyzed slave. If a person wishes to address him, he first smears his arms with ashes, then he scratches his skin, weeps, and sighs. Peas which are sacrificed are held with the finger bent, because the paralytic could eat only in this manner.

Kagoro is offered small arrows of wood or iron with the words, "busenda bwa Kagoro."

Senyakazana is offered peas and lentils, called inkore.

Rubaga is the greatest after Ryangombe, and he is also offered cows.

[304] Umugani rwa Ryangombe. To Ryangombe is dedicated the muku or mulinzi, a tree he once climbed to save himself from a buffalo that attacked him on the hunt. The Banyakissaka have the following story about it.

Umugani rwa Ryangombe
Story of Ryangombe

Ngoni Ryangombe Iya Babinga, ba Nyundo, ngoni Nyamuniga,
That is Ryangombe the Babinga of Nyundo, who is Nyamuniga,

amafizi nayo awabuguma akapfan nimirindo.
? ? ? ? ?

Ryangombe yaliafite nyina, akanga kumumwira. Ryangombe
Ryangombe has mother refused to obey Ryangombe

ashaka kuja kuhiga mwishamba. Nyina nyiwa Ryangombe:
wants to go hunting on the plain. Mother says[to] Ryangombe:

ati mwana wanje leka kuja kuhiga; ati nalose
so child [of] mine let go hunting; so I dreamed

umugezi, utemba uja luguru; ati uzawambuka, ngenda,
a river, which flows upward; so you cross it, you go,

ntuzagaruka. Ati kandi nalose ulukwavu lutagira ishira,
do not come back. So later I dream a rabbit without tail,

uzalwicha, ntuzalubamba. Ati kandi nalose
you will kill it, without obeying. So later I dream

Nyakisha Chimepenebere au Nyakitindi, ati azakulemutsa,
Nyakisha Chimpenebere or Nyakitindi, so she will greet,

atazakulekula Ryangombe. Ati kandi nalose imbogo
she will not leave Ryangombe. So later I dream a buffalo

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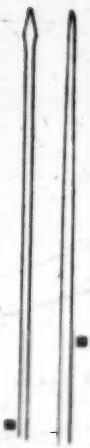

in Kiziba as a Bahima spirit. This is confirmed by the fact that during the initiation ceremonies the female representative of Ryangombe [307] drinks only millet beer. This points to the steppes northeast of the Victoria-Nile from whence, according to tradition, the Batutsi-Bahima once immigrated.

The relationship of the secret cult with the Batutsi stratum is most vividly characterized by the fact that in Kissaka, as well as in the rest of Ruanda, there are many Christians who are Bahutu, but almost none who are Batutsi. The superior social organization of the country makes possible the spread of Christianity. This is also demonstrated by the many Bahutu converts. Among the Batutsi, however, Christianity collides with another well-organized cult which can nullify its progress.

Father Paul Loupias represents the view that the Ryangombe cult is a Bahutu cult. In support of this theory he mentions that a king's son consecrated to Ryangombe, for example, Ishirangabo, the brother of Musinga, loses the right to become king.

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The conception of the kingdom of dead souls and the great power of Ryangombe, whose name one does not dare pronounce without trembling and to whom only the consecrated may offer sacrifices, is in sharp contrast to the idea of the spirits of dead ancestors who remain in intimate contact with the living Bahutu, who live with them, are fed and cared for by them. This contrast permits the assumption that we have here a mixture of very different ideas. Without doubt we are confronted here in the field of religion with the difference between two cultures which have affected each other, the Batutsi and the Bahutu.

[776]

Fig. 163. Biheko Iron Rods from Mulera. (1/6 actual size. III E13770 and III E13727. Length, 130 and 111 centimeters.)

7: Roscoe M-5 (1919-1920) 1924
FO42 Rundi FO42

762 When a man committed suicide, he was buried as usual;
766 but a medicine-man was summoned to tell by augury whether
787 the house had to be deserted or was still fit to live in.

RELIGION

773 I received a statement respecting the religion of the Batuse
[115] from Captain Phillips, the District Commissioner. They were,
● [776] he said, monotheistic and had a chief priest who was initiated into his office by a journey up a certain mountain where there
[778] was said to be a flock of sheep sacred to the god. This was a
[782] dangerous exploit, but before a man was accepted as priest he had to go there with a sheep, which he offered to the god.

This chief priest kept all the fetishes and carried out all religious observances for the king, who kept neither fetishes nor priests about him. When there was any illness or other trouble, the king sent a bull, a sheep, or a fowl (in the case of
[787] war, a bull, a ram, or a cock) to the priest, and an augury was taken from the flow of blood and from the markings on the lungs and intestines.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE KING

The kings of Ruanda—government and taxation by the king—food of the king—wives of the king—heir to the king—death of the king—mourning—burial—accession—the king's mother and her brother

643 THE list of the kings of Ruanda was given as follows: Kigwa,
173 who came from heaven—his son, Kimanuke, who begat Randa — Merano — Kobo — Gihanga — Kalyaruanda — Ruganza — Kirimu — Kigeri — Mutabazi — Gahima — Ndahiru — Ndole — Muhenzi — Namuhesera — Sekalongoro — Huhi — Kirima — Ndabalasa — Mubamwhe — Gahiridirwa — Lwogera — Lwabugiri — Lutariridwa, who was killed by his brother Musinga, who still reigns.

692 The king's court was the court of appeal for all his subjects
645 and his council was composed of the high chiefs.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

Twa, as people living an active and dangerous life, and regarded as almost sub-human, had little to fear except being deprived of food by their master's whim.

All these dangers were real enough and no behaviour could ensure complete immunity. But most people appear to have felt that with some skill and right conduct they were avoidable and consequently did not constitute oppressive threats. Frustrations entailed by starvation and Tutsi requirements were regarded in pre-European days as part of an immutable natural and social order. Ruanda men and women were not inclined to speculate on the impossible, and any order of things other than that they knew belonged definitely for them to the sphere of the impossible. We shall see later on that a deep belief in the fundamental inequality of men had pervaded the ethos of the whole society, and had helped a great deal in the acceptance of frustrating conditions. Consequently these have not led to the usual feeling of aggressiveness or resentment.

Let us now turn to the invisible world as the Ruanda conceived it.[31] Although it was dominated by Imana, a god essentially powerful and good, it was a disquietening world. Indeed the spirits of the dead (*bazimu*), whatever their temper when they were in this world, were thought of as bad. The direct ascendants of the father's and mother's lines were usually protective if their living descendants had observed the proper filial behaviour, if they had not neglected prohibitions and avoidances, and if they had not forgotten offerings. But all other *bazimu* belonging to the same patrilineage were always harmful. *Bazimu* of other lineages were less dangerous unless there were feuds between the particular kin groups concerned. Among the spirits of the dead, a small clique, called the *imandwa*, was particularly powerful and might be helpful to those who had been initiated into the sect of Ryangombe, their chief.[32] Apart from these exceptions, ghosts were essentially malevolent towards living people. At best they did not harm. Of the two categories of men who had special relations with the invisible world, diviners and sorcerers, the latter were definitely considered to be criminals who either used poison (or other deadly substances as for instance when they mixed in food a powder made from the lungs of a person who had died from tuberculosis), or magical

[31] Maquet, 1938, pp. 326-30; Pauwels, 1958.
[32] See photographs in Maquet, 1957.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

well as Tutsi. They did not feel that they were out-group people.

A fourth factor which counterbalanced the socially disintegrative influence of the caste system was the plurality of the structures in which any Ruanda was affiliated.

Through several structures, subjects were much more efficiently bound among themselves and to their rulers than in a unique hierarchy. In the latter case, indeed, if the individual can extricate himself from that hierarchy, he becomes absolutely unattached. In Ruanda, even if one link was broken, the subject did not escape from his superior chiefs. Indeed, he was linked to them, particularly to the mwami, by more than one tie. Almost any Ruanda was dependent on the king through two hierarchical channels: *via* his hill-chief (who himself was subordinated to the cattle- and land-chief) and *via* his army-chief. In addition, the feudal system integrated him into a set of personal loyalty relations such that the person occupying the superior position in one of these relations is himself an inferior in another relation.

It should be mentioned also that any Ruanda was a member of three kin groups: primary and secondary patrilineages and clan. Of course kinship affiliations as such did not cut across caste lines (except for the clan name), but as many of these kinship groups had been for so long established in Ruanda territory, they were certainly a supplementary link between the individual and his country.

The network of relations woven by the political and clientage systems was particularly important in a country where there were no clear-cut groupings based on co-residence. This has led some observers to believe that Ruanda were living in a kind of social vacuum. On the contrary, a Ruanda was never isolated: his social links connected him with the authorities and were ramified, if not in the whole territory, at least in a large area of it.

The last factor of social cohesion to be mentioned here was the ideology developed around the monarchic institution. The mwami was regarded as the king of all Ruanda and not only of the Tutsi. His divine origin keeping him separate from men, bestowed on him an authority which no commoner thought to question. He was closely connected with Imana, conceived as a supreme god rather remote but benevolent. The mwami, representative of Imana, was the father and protector of all Ruanda. Was it not enough to assume towards him a filial attitude and to feel one's

10:Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
FO42 Rundi FO42

WOMEN OF BURUNDI: A STUDY OF SOCIAL VALUES*†

Ethel M. Albert

SUCCESS IN REALIZING the central values of Rundi society is, for men and women alike, dependent on inherited caste position, intelligence and "luck".[1] In this feudal, patriarchal society, the central values are political power and authority; wealth—especially cows and lands and, today, money and the goods and services it can purchase; respect and love from one's dependants; and elegance of appearance, manners and material possessions. What is needed before all else for obtaining the good things of life, the Rundi say, is the favour of *Imana*, the Supreme Being or Providence. Divine favour is also requisite to the realization of such other important values as numerous children, protection against one's many enemies, and the retention of goods already obtained. The chief terrestrial asset for realizing values is position in the social hierarchy.[2] The likelihood of happiness is greatest for the *mwami*, the king, and for the men and women of the royal and princely patrilineages. Opportunity and hope diminish progressively with decreasing status in the hierarchy, through the patrilineages of the Tutsi herders, the Hutu farmers and serfs, and, at the bottom, the Twa, potters and pariahs.

Women, in so markedly patriarchal and patrilineal a society as

*Author's translation.

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10:Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
FO42 Rundi FO42

groom is so that she can obey the rule forbidding her to look at or speak to the man she is to marry. There are nonetheless young people, orphans or children whose parents are inconsiderate, who do not know until the wedding day that arrangements have been made to marry them. If this happens to a young girl, it is said, she becomes very frightened by the sudden necessity to go perhaps very far away to live with a strange family and with a man whom she has probably never seen. Although the young girl receives new clothes from the family of her bridegroom, although she goes to her new home accompanied by a representative of her family and by her friends and cousins (neither her mother nor her father may attend the wedding at the groom's home), the happy dreams of marriage change into nightmares. The bride is hardly reassured by a wedding ceremony that is a symbolic kidnapping. The hostility between the two patrilineages is supposed to be play-acting, but under the influence of beer, it often becomes genuine quarrelling. Weddings are almost invariably marked by arguments and mutual criticisms which are sometimes very bitter. In truth, hatred for a husband may still burn in the memory of an elderly lady as she speaks of her wedding of 50 years ago, if she had not been told in advance and if her husband on their wedding night behaved like a wild young man and took her by force and against her will. If the groom and parents-in-law are kind, they will be able to calm the fears of a bride. For the four days of the honeymoon, they are indulgent towards her. The husband and his brothers give her little gifts to persuade her to eat, they bribe her so that she will talk to them, and the mother-in-law sends beer and food. In this way, she can become accustomed to her new home.

A father who is wise and kind chooses a good husband for his daughter. He will point out that a bad marriage is not worth the trouble. If soon after the marriage his daughter returns home with a legitimate reason for having left her husband, the father will have to return the dowry and wait for someone else to come and ask for his daughter. It sometimes happens that a father is more interested in the dowry than in the happiness of his daughter. He will then accept the first offer made him, even if it comes from a man he knows is bad, or, scandal of scandals, from an old man. (The latter connotes incest, involving as it does a male of an older generation than the female.) Or, if the father is dead, a girl may be given by her paternal uncle to anyone who comes along. Men of this kind do not allow the women to come back home again when they are dissatisfied with their husbands. An orphan or the daughter of a bad father will have the good luck to please

593 her husband and to have a good life with him only if she is liked
776 by *Imana*.

564 The dowry represents wealth for the father. The average Tutsi
583 expects to receive a cow for his daughter, an average Hutu eight hoes. However, today the Hutu often and the Tutsi sometimes pay
[556] the dowry in cash. For the husband, the dowry purchases the
[178] children produced by the woman during the term of their marriage. For the young woman, the dowry is a measure of her social value. She has discussed with other girls how much a man will have to give for her. Young Tutsikazi flatter each other by saying that they are certainly worth four cows—the dowry of a Tutsikazi of a very good patrilineage. A Hutukazi may boast of the 2,500 Congo francs (50 dollars) that were given for her, for everyone knows that 1,500 Congo francs (30 dollars) is the average for a Hutukazi. Or, a poor woman who is slightly mad is overcome by shame, for everyone knows that her father has given her in marriage without demanding a dowry. The more one has given for a young woman,
[554] the higher her social status. The wife of a wealthy man will have
[556] more clothes and less work, more respect and less hardship, than the wife of a poor man.

562 Although a young woman looks forward to marriage to rise
585 above her painfully low status as a female child, she knows very well that what lies before her is a lifetime of work and that she will for a long time be under the authority of others. She is in effect sent from her father's household, where she works for her mother, to her husband's household, where she works for her husband and her mother-in-law. Regarding the sentiments of the husband towards his wife, or of men in general towards women, it is enough
[538] to mention that in the rich oral literature of Burundi, there is not one poem or song of love. At best, among the *amazina*—praise-
[533] poems, most of which praise the king or a generous patron or the man himself as a warrior—there are several which praise a good wife. She is praised for her cleverness, for her indefatigable efforts on behalf of her husband, for the cleanness of the butter she churns, and she may be given the compliment of comparison with a cow. In all truth, a man may sometimes have a great love, or be infatuated
[152] with his wife or his mistress. He does not talk about it very much; he would certainly not talk about it with strangers. At all events, love is not relevant to married life except in the general form it takes as the basis of the exchange of gifts and services between superiors and inferiors.

591 Every married woman of every class and caste works for her
[593] husband. Often a bride goes to live in the same household with her